

forelegs and 'innards'. When I picked it up, the powerful hind-legs attempted to push my fingers away in the usual manner. Being curious to see how long this half-insect's life would persist, I carried it indoors and placed it under an inverted glass in my room.

About noon, three hours after separation from the head, this rear portion was still standing normally, and showed the usual reaction when I picked it up. Six hours after decapitation, at 3 p.m., I lifted the glass and lightly touched the wing-cases, whereupon the creature executed a typical leap, which landed it some two feet away and reached a roughly estimated height of 15 inches. At 6 p.m. there was some sign of sagging from the upright stance; but it was only at 9 p.m., twelve hours after decapitation, that the body definitely collapsed and spontaneous movement ceased.

DEV KUNJ,
PRABHAT ROAD,
POONA-4,
April 26, 1966.

THOMAS GAY

[A. D. Imms (1957, A GENERAL TEXTBOOK OF ENTOMOLOGY) writes '... each segment of the (insect) body, with its ganglion, is capable of a considerable degree of autonomous reflex behaviour... Centralization of function is, therefore, less well developed than in the vertebrates. ... Local reflexes are also involved in reproductive movements—the isolated abdomen of a female silkworm moth can be fertilized and lay eggs, while in mantids the copulatory movements of the male and movements of the ovipositor can be made after decapitation.'—EDS.]

14. RECORD OF *PARACLEPSIS PRAEDATRIX* HARDING, 1924
(ANNELIDA : HIRUDINEA), FROM A NEW HOST, *NATRIX*
PISCATOR (SCHNEIDER), THE CHECKERED KEELBACK
(REPTILIA : SERPENTES)

The leech *Paraclepsis praedatrix* Harding, 1924, is distributed throughout India, mostly in a free-living state in ponds, tanks, etc. (but not in running water). The only record of parasitization by the leech is on the freshwater tortoise, *Lissemys punctata granosa* (Schoepff) (Harding & Moore 1927). The present note deals with another record of parasitization on a reptile, the new host being the Checkered Keelback *Natrix piscator* (Schneider), a very common snake of India. The leech was seen coming out of the buccal cavity of the snake, collected alive by Dr. B. Biswas from Salt Lake, off Calcutta, when the snake was freshly killed by chloroform in the laboratory two days after collection.